

Message Text

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USUN NEW YORK 1259

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7388

LIMDIS

1. VICE MINISTER OF THE NATIONAL UNIFICATION BOARD YI KYU-HAK TOLD NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE NOV 1 THAT RESUMPTION OF SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE WOULD PROBABLY TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS. HE BASED HIS ASSESSMENT ON KIM IL-SONG'S RECENT COMMENTS TO VISITING BULGARIAN DELEGATION THAT DIALOGUE CAN BE RESUMED ONLY IF SOUTH ACCEPTS NORTH'S PRECONDITIONS. VICE MINISTER YI ADDED THAT AFTER ADJOURNMENT OF UNGA THE NORTH KOREAN INTERNAL SITUATION MAY SO DEVELOP AS TO COMPEL THE NORTH KOREANS TO RESUME THE DIALOGUE.

2. HEADLINES REPORTING VICE MINISTER YI'S COMMENTS EMPHASIZED PROSPECT FOR MORE LONG DELAY, ALTHOUGH HIS ACTUAL STATEMENT WAS MORE AMBIGUOUS.

3. RANKING ROK OFFICIALS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT PARK ON TWO OCCASIONS, HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY INTEND TO TAKE INITIATIVE TO RESUME THE DIALOGUE AFTER UNGA ADJOURNMENT. PRESIDENT PARK HAS TOLD THE AMBASSADOR HE WOULD REPLACE YI HU-RAK AS SOUTH'S CO-CHAIRMAN OF SOUTH-NORTH COORDINATING COMMITTEE IF AT SAME TIME NORTH WOULD REPLACE KIM YONG-CHU AS ITS CO-CHAIRMAN.

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RM CHIEF RED CROSS NEGOTIATOR YI BOM-SOK TOLD POLITICAL COUNSELOR

OCT 17 THAT HI HU-RAK ALSO HAD INDICATED INTENTION TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO RESUME DIALOGUE AFTER UNGA. ALTHOUGH EXPECTING TO CONTINUE PLAYING A GUIDING ROLE BEHIND THE SCENES, YI SAID THAT HE WOULD BE REPLACED AS CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH-NORTH COORDINATING COMMITTEE (SNCC). IN ADDITION, ACCORDING TO YI BOM-SOK, YI HU-RAK WAS CONTEMPLATING AN OFFER OF A COMPLETE NEW SLATE OF MEMBERS ON THE SNCC, INCLUDING A "GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE" AND REPRESENTATIVES OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ECONOMIC ENTITIES.

HABIB

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